

**Senate's Questions for Oakland University Appointees and
Proposed Responses from Ganesh Reddy**

1. What goals would you like to achieve during your time on the board?

I would like to help the Oakland University (OU) to continue to be an outstanding university. I'm interested in maintaining and building on the quality of education delivered to Oakland students. I believe the Board should proactively set and review policies while it is for the President and his administration to implement the same. Under the tight budgetary forecast for the foreseeable future, it is necessary for the Board to set sound fiscal controls, review and evaluate the spending priorities.

2. In your discussions with the Governor's office prior to your appointment, what was the general charge given to you?

I submitted my application to serve the State with a preference to serve in an University Board preferably Oakland University because of my familiarity with the Oakland area and the phenomenal quality growth that OU has achieved in the last 10 years. The Governor has asked me that I serve with excellence and integrity.

3. Over the last 15 or 20 years it seems that all state universities have been expanding programs to try to offer everything to everyone. Do you think this a good idea?

I do not believe in expanding programs or creating new programs without a set policy that aligns with a University's strategic goals and mission. That policy should take into account today's realities and help the local and State economy. All new programs must be evaluated carefully throughout their first five years to determine whether they are adding value, meeting the goals and financially prudent.

4. There is a proposal to separate funding of the state's three largest universities from the other twelve universities. Should the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University be separately funded?

I am opposed anything that treats OU as a second class university and I am glad to note that the Governor's budget has uniform increases for all State universities. Whether to fund separately or not is up to the legislature and Governor to decide.

5. Under what circumstances would you vote to increase tuition at your school?

OU should try to hold the students as harmless as possible when considering what areas should be the spending priorities. From the available statistics, OU has done a good job in the past of holding down tuition increases to the lowest possible levels, while still maintaining the high quality educational experience for its students. I understand that OU

has done this by trimming operating costs and other expenses in some pretty creative ways. But, there comes a point where cutting operational costs will adversely impact the quality of education and we cannot let that happen.

6. Do you think your University has done a good job of controlling costs? Where would you find additional cost savings?

I feel from the information I have gathered, OU has done a remarkable job of controlling costs. OU's General Fund expenditures per student compared to the other Michigan public universities shows OU's relative efficiency in operational costs. I am happy to learn that most of this was accomplished while holding instruction and students harmless in the process.

7. What type of outcomes should the university measure to determine if it is being successful (i.e. graduation rates, how long it took to graduate, job placement in the graduates major, etc.)? Does your university currently do anything like this?

It is essential for the university to measure student outcomes and performance to: 1) determine if the university is meeting its mission and program goals; 2) improve the programs; 3) study the impact of the programs and 3) achieve efficiency. I understand that OU currently tracks the following on an annual basis:

- Student persistence from one grade level to the next
- Time to degree completion
- Graduation rates
- Learning outcomes in all academic courses including all general education coursework
- Job placement rate and graduate school attendance

It is good to note that OU has been participating in national survey programs such as The National Survey of Student Engagement and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program to determine how OU fares relative to other institutions with similar student profiles. If, at a future date, the State or federal government were to mandate a higher education assessment program for accountability purposes, I believe that standardized outcome measures should be designed consistent with different institutional missions so as to compare apples with apples.

8. What is your position on the importance of state universities as authorizers of charter public schools?

The purpose of PSAs or charter schools is to offer educational choice to families. The universities should integrate the concept and implementation of charter schools into the academic research and educational mission of the School of Education and Human Services, so that faculty and student research and educational experiences are enhanced and are consistent with the university's overall mission.

9. What is your position of the new constitutional amendment banning the use of race and gender preferences in public university admissions? How will you ensure that the amendment is implemented at your university?

As a true and honest citizen, my position on any issue is irrelevant once the issue is either settled by law or by people's mandate. The issue in question was recently decided by the passage of Proposal 2. I fully support the implementation of the same. OU's commitment to diversity within the parameters of the law should be encouraged.

10. In which areas of technological research does your university specialize? How effective is your school at commercializing this research to grow the state's economy?

I understand that OU is very strong in applied research and has strong research capabilities in biomedical technology, such as in the Eye Research Institute (ERI), and business administration and entrepreneurship. OU has an on-campus business incubator "OU INC" to help start-up businesses successfully root themselves in Michigan. Statistics show that about half of all new businesses fail within first five years, while those that are incubated have an 87 percent rate of success. OU also has the Fastening and Joining Research Institute (FAJRI), which is very unique and one of a kind in the nation. I learned that the technology that came from FAJRI has helped auto manufacturers improve efficiency and stay competitive, and it even helped the Fermi 2 nuclear power plant get back online after a malfunction that forced it to shut down for several weeks at a cost of \$1 million per day. Both FAJRI and the ERI have received millions of dollars in federal funding. OU is also unique because it provides undergraduates with opportunities to get involved in research early on in the life.

11. Do you see postsecondary education as mainly a conduit to the work world or is there intrinsic value to pursuing a higher education?

Of course, there is intrinsic value in pursuing postsecondary education. Undergraduate education should instill in students practical skills for the workplace but also experiences in diversity, global citizenship, writing, critical thinking, and adapting to technology—experiences that will help them in whatever career, life role, or human relationship they choose after they leave the university.

12. Do you think K-12 institutions are doing a good job of preparing students for college? Why?

There is ample evidence that K-12 can do better in preparing students for postsecondary success and competency in the workplace. I am happy to note the revamping of the K-12 curriculum in the recent years. Especially in the case of high school, we must make certain that a rigorous curriculum is in place so that our graduating high school seniors are poised to not just survive, but excel in the university environment.

It's important that K-12 and universities view their relationship as a partnership. I understand that OU excels at those partnerships with programs like the Wade McRee program, Upward Bound and Oakland's involvement in the Longfellow School project in Pontiac. Moreover, OU should meet regularly with high school counselors to make sure they are kept apprised of all admission requirements.